Korandje language

Korandje (Korandje: *kwạ̱ɽa n dzyǝy*; Arabic: البلبالية, romanized: *al-Balbaliyyah*) is a Northern Songhay language which is by far the most northerly of the Songhay languages. It is spoken around the Algerian oasis of Tabelbala by about 3,000 people; its name literally means "village's language". While retaining a basically Songhay structure, it is extremely heavily influenced by Berber and Arabic; about 20% of the 100-word Swadesh list of basic vocabulary consists of loans from Arabic or Berber, and the proportion of the lexicon as a whole is considerably higher.[4]

The only published studies of Korandje based on first-hand data are Cancel (1908),[5] a 45-page article by a French lieutenant covering basic grammar and vocabulary and a couple of sample texts; Champault (1969),[6] an anthropological study containing some incidental linguistically relevant materials such as sentences and rhymes; Tilmatine (1991, 1996),[7] an article (published in German, then reworked in French) revisiting Cancel and Champault and adding about a page of new data recorded by the author; and Souag (2010a, 2010b),[8] the former arguing the case for Western Berber loans in the lexicon, the latter studying the effect of contact with Berber and Arabic on its grammar.

Contents

Phonology

No complete phonological study of Korandje, systematically justified by minimal pairs, has yet been made. According to Souag (2010),[9] the vowel system consists of lax ə, ŭ [ʊ], ə̣ [ʌ] and tense a [a], i, u, ạ [ɑ], ụ [o], while the consonant system is as follows:

Korandje	
Kwarandzyey	
Native to	Algeria
Region	Tabelbala, Béchar Province
Native speakers	3,000 (2010)[1]
Language family	Nilo-Saharan?
	▪ Songhay
	▪ Northern
	▪ **Korandje**
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	kcy
Glottolog	kora1291 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/kora1291)[2]

Location of Songhay languages[3]

Northwest Songhay:

☐ Korandje
☐ Koyra Chiini
☐ Tadaksahak
☐ Tasawaq
☐ Tagdal

Eastern Songhay:

☐ Tondi Songway Kiini
☐ Humburi Senni

	Koyraboro Senni
☐	Koyraboro Senni
☐	Zarma language
☐	Dendi

	Labial		Coronal		Palatal	Velar		Uvular		Pharyngeal	Glottal
	plain	lab.	plain	pha.		plain	lab.	plain	lab.		
Nasal	m	mʷ	n								
Stop voiceless			t	tˤ		k	kʷ	q	qʷ		ʔ
Stop voiced	b	bʷ	d	dˤ		g	gʷ				
Affricate voiceless			t͡s								
Affricate voiced			d͡z								
Fricative voiceless	f	fʷ	s	sˤ	(ʃ)			x	xʷ	ħ	h
Fricative voiced			z	zˤ	(ʒ)			ɣ	ɣʷ	ʕ	
Approximant		w	l	lˤ	j						
Trill			r	rˤ							

Items in brackets are not normally used by older speakers. A bilabial click is attested in one baby-talk word.

An earlier proposal by Nicolaï (1981),[10] based on a very limited corpus of recordings provided by Champault, suggested a smaller phoneme inventory:

	Labial	Coronal	Palatal	Velar	Labiovelar	Glottal
Plosives	b	t d		k g	kʷ gʷ	
Affricates		ts dz				
Approximants		l	j		w	
Fricatives	f	s z	ʃ ʒ	ɣ		h
Nasals	m	n				
Trill		r				

alongside pharyngealised consonants *ṭ ḍ ṣ ẓ ṇ ḥ* as well as *x q*, found mainly in loanwords, and a six-vowel system: *a, i, u, e, o*, and *ə* (schwa).

Grammar

Pronouns

The pronouns are: *ayəy*, I; *ni*, you; *ana*, he/she/it; *yayu*, we; *ndzyu*, you (plural); *ini*, they. Possessive forms are *ʕan*, my; *nən*, your; *an*, his/her/its; *yan*, our; *ndzən*, your (pl.); *in*, their. Subject agreement prefixes on the verb are *ʕa-* I; *n-*, you; *a-*, he/she/it; *ya-*, we; *ndz-*, you (plural); *i-*, they.

Verbs

The infinitive and singular imperative are both the stem (e.g. *kani* "sleep"); the plural imperative takes a prefix *wə-* (*wə-kkani* "sleep! (pl.)"). Cancel describes the conjugations as follows (also for *xani*):

English	Preterite	English	Aorist
I slept	*a xani*	I sleep	*a (ba) am xani*
you slept	*n(e) xani*	you sleep	*n ba am xani*
he/she/it slept	*a xani*	he/she/it sleeps	*a âm xani*
we slept	*ia xani*	we sleep	*ia âm xani*
you (pl.) slept	*nd'(a) xani*	you (pl.) sleep	*nd'ba âm xani*
they slept	*ia xan*	they sleep	*iba am xani*

According to Tilmatine, verbs are negated by surrounding them with `*as ... hé/hi*, e.g. *ni `as ba enya hé > n`esbanya hé* "do not eat!". "No" is *hoho* or *ho*: *n'd'xani bînu, willa ho?* "did you sleep yesterday, or not?".

Nouns

The most productive plural marker is the clitic *=yu*, e.g. *tsəksi* "goat" > *tsəks=yu* "goats". This marker comes at the end of the "core noun phrase", the unit consisting of noun+numeral+adjective+demonstrative: e.g. *ạḍṛạ inẕa bya=ɣ=yu* (mountain three big=DEM=PL) "these three big mountains".[11] Some Berber loans retain versions of their original plurals, usually with the circumfix *(ts)i-...-ən*, e.g. *awṛəẕ* "heel" > *iwṛạẕən* "heels"; while the morphemes involved are clearly of Berber origin, the details of this system differ from any one attested Berber language, and this plural is extended to at least one item of Songhay origin, *tsạṛəw* "spoon" > *tsiṛạwən*. Some Arabic loans similarly retain Arabic plurals.

The possessive is expressed by the particle *n*, with the possessor preceding the possessed: *wi n tsəffạ* "woman 's knife".

Numbers

The only non-Arabic numbers in normal use are *a-ffu* "one", *inka* "two", and *inẕa* "three". There also exist "cryptic" (argot) and children's counting systems. The syntax of numerals in the noun phrases is complicated.

External links

- See Information on Korandje (https://web.archive.org/web/20120204070744/http://www.berber emultimedia.com/etudes_docum/edb_14.pdf). (in PDF format; go to p. 163)
- Jabal al-Lughat (http://lughat.blogspot.com/)- a linguistic blog by Lameen Souag, a specialist on Korandje (note that the blog calls it Kwarandjie, Kwarandzie, or Kwarandzyey)

References

1. Korandje (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/kcy/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Korandje" (http://glott olog.org/resource/languoid/id/kora1291). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. This map is based on classification from Glottolog and data from Ethnologue.

4. *Grammatical Contact in the Sahara: Arabic, Berber, and Songhay in Tabelbala and Siwa*, Lameen Souag, PhD thesis, SOAS, 2010

5. «Etude sur le dialecte de Tabelbala», Lt. Cancel, *Revue Africaine* 1908, Nº 270-271, 302-347.

6. *Une oasis du Sahara nord-occidental, Tabelbala*, Dominique Champault, Paris: CNRS, 1969.

7. "Tabelbala: Eine Songhaysprachinsel in der Algerischen Sahara", Mohamed Tilmatine, *Afrikanische Arbeitspapiere Sondernummer* 377-397, 1991; "Un parler berbèro-songhay du sud-ouest algérien (Tabelbala): Elements d'histoire et de linguistique", Mohamed Tilmatine, *Etudes et documents berbères* 14:163-198, 1996.

8. "The Western Berber Stratum in Kwarandzyey (Tabelbala, Algeria)", in ed. D. Ibriszimow, M. Kossmann, H. Stroomer, R. Vossen, *Études berbères V – Essais sur des variations dialectales et autres articles*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe, 2010; *Grammatical Contact in the Sahara: Arabic, Berber, and Songhay in Tabelbala and Siwa*, Lameen Souag, PhD thesis, SOAS, 2010

9. *Grammatical Contact in the Sahara: Arabic, Berber, and Songhay in Tabelbala and Siwa*, Lameen Souag, PhD thesis, SOAS, 2010

10. *Les dialectes du songhay. Contribution à l'étude des changements linguistiques*, Robert Nicolaï, Paris: CNRS (1981)

11. *Grammatical Contact in the Sahara: Arabic, Berber, and Songhay in Tabelbala and Siwa*, Lameen Souag, PhD thesis, SOAS, 2010